

# New England HOME

Celebrating Fine Design, Architecture, and Building

## *In Tune*

WARM NOTES OF SPRING



A corner of the new family room features a custom console table, a lamp from Bunny Williams Home, a vintage Audubon print, and curtain fabric from Schumacher. **FACING PAGE:** The new mudroom is inspired by a classic tack room—a reference to the client's love of horses; the paneling and cabinetry are Douglas fir, and the flooring is Belgian bluestone.



# Origin Story

In Wellesley, an all-star design team looks to the property's history as a guideline for renovation.

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**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** As part of the renovation and expansion, architect Mike Tartamella designed a new garage and connector that look as though they could have always been there. In the living room, designer Katie Rosenfeld paired a custom sofa wrapped in Schumacher velvet and Samuel & Sons fringe with a pair of wing chairs, also upholstered in a Schumacher print. The living room walls feature a sumptuous bone-inlay wallcovering from Schumacher.

It's not uncommon for older homes to have seen their fair share of renovations, but there comes a point when numerous modifications can do more harm than good. Such was the case with this 1930s Wellesley, Massachusetts, property, which the team at Patrick Ahearn Architect was tasked with renovating for longtime clients. "It's a nice example of a colonial, but several additions had created a maze of spaces and level changes," explains architect Mike Tartamella. "Our objectives

“THIS IS THE HOUSE where everyone congregates, so the clients wanted it to be beautiful without being overly fancy.”

—Interior designer Katie Rosenfeld



**ABOVE:** A Scalamandré wallpaper provides an unexpected pop in the dining room; the sideboard, lamps, and art are all vintage.  
**LEFT:** Custom chairs surround a table from Hickory Chair.

were to take cues from the scale and massing of the original structure and rework the floor plan to accommodate the way we live today.”

After stripping the additions—which accounted for a large portion of the residence—the firm expanded the original structure by 2,500 square feet across three levels. On the main floor, the den, living room, and dining room are the only spaces that remain within the existing footprint. Two main circulation paths on this level encourage easy flow while allowing for more natural light. Aside from a new kitchen, family room, screened porch, mudroom, and garage, there are a host of lower-level spaces, including a game room, a media room, and a guest suite. Upstairs, four existing bedrooms are joined by a new office as well as a bunk



**ABOVE:** A stained oak island topped with Imperial Danby marble lends warmth to the kitchen. **LEFT:** Waterworks tile and Benjamin Moore Chimichurri spice up the pantry with its hammered polished-nickel sink from Native Trails. **FACING PAGE:** For casual meals, the family gathers in the kitchen where custom Lee Industries chairs upholstered in a Lisa Fine Textiles fabric rest on an antique rug from Landry & Arcari Rugs and Carpeting.



room and hangout space for the couple's three boys.

But catering to the needs of an active family wasn't the only mandate Tartamella had to address. The wife, a veterinarian, and the rest of the family are animal lovers, counting dogs, cats, chickens, and goats among their pets. Therefore, careful attention was paid to the comfort and care of the animals, from the chicken coop to the tricked-out kennel complete with a kitchen.

"The addition bisects the lot, with a yard for the animals on one side and a patio on the other that's perfectly positioned for entertaining," notes Tartamella, who worked with builder Doug Whitla and Sudbury Design Group principal Michael Coutu to make the most of the undulating one-acre site.



Game night takes place around a Theodore Alexander table in the oak-paneled den, which is lit by a ceiling fixture from The Urban Electric Co. Three desks—one for each of the clients' children—are built into the paneling and can be closed when not in use.



**ABOVE:** Rosenfeld turned down the volume in the primary bedroom, where wallpaper from Brunswick & Fils makes a quiet but strong statement. **LEFT:** The wife's closet is layered with a vintage chair from Hickory Chair and an antique runner from Landry & Arcari Rugs and Carpeting. **FACING PAGE:** In the primary bath, the vanity, designed by Rosenfeld and built by Triple Crown Cabinet & Millwork, is topped with Calacatta Oliva marble.



“The expansion required hammering ledge and building a retaining wall,” explains Coutu. Once Whitla’s team constructed the wall, Coutu selected a stone veneer that would provide the illusion that it had always been there. “One of the biggest challenges of this job was incorporating new elements into an old site,” says Whitla. “We tried to maintain the feeling of an old property.”

The same goes for the inside, which, according to Tartamella, “looks like it could be original.” He collaborated with designer Katie Rosenfeld on everything from materials to kitchen and bath layouts. “This is the house where everyone congregates, so the clients wanted it to be beautiful without being overly fancy,” says Rosenfeld. “And with boys and animals running around, the materials need to be hardworking.”

Color and pattern abound, with an upbeat palette that runs the gamut from



**ABOVE:** Michael Coutu overhauled the one-acre property, designing a patio and creating a new plant scheme that's safe for the family's animals. **RIGHT:** Barn doors lead from the garage to the kennel area, which is complete with a kitchen for the animals; the flooring is a durable Belgian bluestone, the countertops are soapstone, and the cheerful paint color is Farrow & Ball Babouche. **FACING PAGE:** In the sunroom, a sofa from Serena & Lily and a table and chair by Thomas O'Brien for Century make for an inviting sitting area.

rich jewel tones to more unexpected pops of mustard and red. "The only room that differs is the primary suite, which is very ethereal," says Rosenfeld, whose inspirations include an English country house and a gentleman's farm. "It's Ralph Lauren meets the Cotswolds."

Custom furnishings are paired with vintage artwork, antique rugs, and contemporary lighting. "The clients wanted a simple, comfortable house," says Tartamella. "And now it feels like one cohesive thought."

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** For details, see Resources.

**ARCHITECTURE:** Patrick Ahearn Architect  
**INTERIOR DESIGN:** Katie Rosenfeld & Co.  
**BUILDER:** Whitla Brothers Builders  
**LANDSCAPE DESIGN:** Sudbury Design Group

